

Consumer Reports Health BEST BUY DRUGS

Free Guidance for Consumers on Prescription Medicines



NEWS UPDATE:

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Enlarged Prostate Best Treated with Older Generic Drug

For millions of men, the urinary problems caused by an enlarged prostate—a condition known as benign prostatic hypertrophy, or BPH—can be burdensome and interfere with their quality of life. Many men with BPH will either have no symptoms or symptoms that are mild and not that bothersome. It's usually not a serious or life-threatening condition, but it can cause problems with urinating, primarily in men age 50 and older.

If you have urinary problems due to BPH, lifestyle changes can often provide relief and should be tried first. Those include going to the bathroom when you first feel the urge, reducing or eliminating your intake of alcohol and caffeine, and limiting your fluid intake before bedtime.

If your symptoms persist or worsen, the next step is usually to consider medication--alpha-blockers and 5-alpha-reductase inhibitors are the most commonly used, and sometimes in combination.

Consumer Reports *Best Buy Drugs* has just published its most [recent analysis of drugs to treat prostate enlargement](#). We have selected the alpha-blocker **doxazosin** as our *Best Buy* pick, and we recommend it as a first-line treatment for BPH. It has a long track record of being both safe and effective, and it's available as an inexpensive generic drug, costing a cash price of \$10 or less for a month's supply. The savings would be significant compared to taking one of the costly brand-name alpha-blockers, like Flomax, which can cost up to \$246 for a month's supply.

If doxazosin doesn't work for you, you might try another alpha-blocker, terazosin. Or you and your doctor might want to consider adding a reductase inhibitor to your regimen. In that case, we recommend **finasteride**. It is the only reductase inhibitor available as a generic, so it costs significantly less than a brand-name drug (\$75 a month versus \$111 or \$127). In addition, the combination of finasteride and doxazosin has been proven to delay the progression of BPH symptoms.

Read the rest of the [Consumer Reports Best Buy Drugs Report: Evaluating Prescription Drugs Used to Treat Enlarged Prostate](#), for more on specific symptoms, diagnosis, medication dosages and formulations, drug side effect and safety information.

If you have problems with urinating—increased frequency, feeling that the bladder is not completely emptied, or the need to strain while urinating—you should see a doctor. The symptoms of BPH can be similar to the symptoms of prostate cancer, so it's important to get an accurate diagnosis. You should also contact your doctor immediately if you have a fever or chills, pain in your back, side or abdomen, cloudy or bloody urine, or pain when urinating. Those could be signs of serious complications that require medical attention.

For more information on more than 200 prescription drugs, alternatives to high-priced drugs and *Best Buy* selections for the most common, chronic medical conditions, visit www.ConsumerReportsHealth.org/BestBuyDrugs.